



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **MARYLAND STATE POLICE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 22, 2012**

### **NEW LAW ALERT ISSUED FOR MOTOR SCOOTER AND MOPED RIDERS**

(PIKESVILLE, MD) -- Maryland State Police and local law enforcement are reminding the owners and riders of motor scooters and mopeds that a new law taking effect in less than two months will make significant changes in the use of their chosen form of transportation.

On October 1, 2012, new Maryland vehicle laws will take effect that require all motor scooters and mopeds to be titled and insured, while all operators and passengers must wear a helmet and eye protection. These new requirements are in addition to the existing law that requires all motor scooter and moped operators to possess a valid driver's license or a moped operator's permit.

All drivers and passengers of motor scooters and mopeds will be required to wear motorcycle helmets that meet safety standards set by the United States Department of Transportation. Drivers and passengers must also wear eye protection, unless the vehicle is equipped with a windscreen.

Motor scooter and moped owners will be required to insure their vehicles. They must obtain at least the minimum vehicle liability insurance and must carry proof of the insurance with them whenever they are operating the scooter or moped.

Motor scooters and mopeds will be required to be titled by the Motor Vehicle Administration. Owners will be able to obtain titling information through the MVA website at [www.mva.maryland.gov](http://www.mva.maryland.gov) beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. When the title is obtained, the vehicle owner will be provided with a decal that must be displayed on the rear of the vehicle.

Maryland law defines a motor scooter as a non-pedal vehicle that has a seat for the operator; has two wheels, of which one is ten or more inches in diameter; has a step through chassis; has a motor with a rating of 2.7 brake horsepower or less, or a 50 cc engine or less; and is equipped with an automatic transmission.

A moped is defined as a bicycle that is designed to be operated by human power with the assistance of a motor; is equipped with pedals that can drive the rear wheel(s); has two or three wheels, one of which is more than 14 inches in diameter; has a motor with a rating of 1.5 brake horsepower or less and a 50 cc engine or less.

The drivers of motor scooters and mopeds are required to follow the same rules of the road as bicycles. Those rules include:

- Drivers must ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practical and safe as possible, except when:
  - Making a left turn;
  - Operating on a one-way street;
  - Passing a stopped or slower moving vehicle;
  - Avoiding pedestrians and road hazards;
  - The right lane is a right turn only lane;
  - Operating in a lane too narrow for a bicycle or motor scooter and another vehicle to travel safely side by side.
- Drivers may ride side by side only if flow of traffic is unimpeded;
- Drivers must exercise due care when passing;
- Headsets covering both ears, or earplugs in both ears are not permitted;
- Scooters or mopeds may not be operated on roadways with speed limits greater than 50 mph;
- Scooters or mopeds may not be operated at more than 30 mph;
- Drivers may not operate on a roadway where there is a smooth paved bike lane or paved shoulder available, meaning they must use the bike lane or paved shoulder instead of the roadway;
- Drivers must obey the rules of the road applicable to all vehicles.

Troopers and local law enforcement across Maryland have received training regarding the new laws. Scooter and moped drivers who violate the new law can expect to be stopped and issued traffic citations or warnings, beginning October 1.

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